AFTER READING "FADING ECHOES"

BY MUHAMMAD SALEEM

Rubaeyaat-e-Umar Khayam couldn't have not found high place among the world's elite poetic literature, had they not been translated by Fitz Gerald in English by capturing their spirit with sublimity. In the same way, great Russian, German & French fiction & poetry found place in the wider world of literature, through their translations in English & so is the case with other great literatures in different languages of the world. Moreover, the translations of different genres of literature in English language have paved way for their further translations in other languages, expanding their readership beyond geographical borders.

This preamble establishes the fact that how important role a good translation plays in bringing a piece of creation to the larger world of readers. While reading any poetic translation, my vision is always attracted towards the poetic translation of Faiz's poetry by Daud Kamal & one of the couplets always haunts me as its true spirit has been captured by the translator. I quote the famous couplet of Faiz & then its imaginative as well as creative translation by Daud Kamal:

اک فرصتِ گناہ ملی، وہ بھی چار دن
دیکھے ہیں ہم نے حوصلے پروردگار کے

One Brief interlude, of forbidden pleasure
Do not speak to me
Of the infinite mercy of God

It is not a mere conversion of words from one language to another but the creative mind seems to be working with imaginative force to produce what actually the poet wants to convey.

Ahmed Hussain Mujahid is fortunate enough to have perched a place in global literary venue with poetic translation of his Hindko master piece **"Qainchi"**, by a visionary writer, Mr. Muhammad Saleem, who has already announced his thumping arrival on literary scene through his novel "**Dew On Rocks**". The poetic translation of **"Qainchi"** might have come natural to Mr. Muhammad Saleem, as the locale of the famous folklore is the same as appears in his novel. **"Qainchi"** is not merely a love story, an intriguing tale or a legend; it is something more, as it touches the hearts of readers & listeners with all its intensity of emotions, emanating from the strong physical & spiritual bond between **Haleema & Munshi.**

The poetic translation of **"Qainchi"**, really demanded a poetic mind to conceive & tell the story with all its intensity & poetic imagination, engrossing its true spirit instead of mere flat translation with crude art of story-telling. When we go through the lines of **"Fading Echoes"** we cannot but admire Mr. Muhammad Saleem for his command on English Language & that too literary, suiting to the tale.

Being an ardent student of English Literature, Mr. Muhammad Saleem has used embellished language, making ample use of figures of speech & other literary tools to assign more force & sublimity to the poetry of **"Qainchi"**. The translator could have easily converted the love tale in blank verse but he has chosen a difficult path, by using lyrical meter with proper rhyme in each line, which again shows his command on language with large vocabulary, which comes natural to him.

For evidence, I quote few lines from **"Qainchi"** & then their poetic translation from **"Fading Echoes"**. These couplets are taken from the scene, when Halima is standing in front of a mirror in pensive mood. Her monologue begins:

مینڑاں بج کدے انہجی بارش نینہ ہوئی
کدے اِس طراں رات ہسن کے نینہ روئی
کدے بالیاں شور کیتا نینہ اننا
پُلاں نے کدے غور کیتا نینہ اننا
کدے اپنڑیں دل بچ میں جہانی نینہ ماری
مینڑاں سی نینہ ماری کدے باہر اُڈاری
کدے برف ہونٹاں نے گلدی نینہ دبکی
کدے اگ محبت دی بلدی نینہ دبکی

Rain lashes down, a symphony of night
Darshi's laughter weeps in the fading light
Earrings clamor, a chaotic beat
Flowers whisper secrets, bitter sweet
My heart, a stranger, I have kept it veiled
No yearning for what the hilltops hold concealed
Melting snow on burning lips unseen
Love fire ignites, a vibrant unknown scene

Mr. Muhammad Saleem deserves our admiration & we are thankful to him, for his marvelous effort of transforming **"Qainchi"** into **"Fading Echoes** "in its true spirit. Such creative translation could not have taken place, had Mr. Muhammad Saleem been not conversant with cultural & rustic force of Hindko language with all its proverbial & metaphorical use. The translation of the poetic tale seems to have come natural & effortless to him, therefore, the readers as well the listeners enjoy its flowing melody, by sharing the emotions running through the lines.

Due to his craftsmanship, Mr. Muhammad Saleem has produced a master piece in **"Fading Echoes"** which exposed a local love story to the wider world of readers of literature. Now **"Qainch"** is no more a folklore, floating on the lips of shepherds & gypsies, travelling across Hazara & Kashmir; it has been transformed into an immortal piece of literature. Hence **"Qainchi"** will no more be a **fading echo**; it will keep echoing loudly in the deserts & over the roaring oceans, from where it will be transported by singing birds & winds beyond the horizons unseen.

Thank you

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